

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Computer Centre

NEWSLETTER

authorization : Director of the Computer Centre

1 SYSTEM PERFORMANCE - OCTOBER 1973

USEFUL TIME	423	81%
GOOD TIME	443	85%
ON TIME	521	100%
NO OF CRASHES	23	
TIME BETWEEN CRASHES	19.28 HRS	

2 PRIVATE DISK PACKS

Currently the Centre hires private disk packs at the rate of \$20 per month including storage charges. This has advantage to users who may require a disk for a short period or is not in a position to outlay capital for the purchase of a disk.

Recently, the Centre has been asked whether users may purchase disks. There are some problems with this. For technical reasons, the Centre would not agree to mount disks that had been removed from the Centre and the Centre would not accept liability for the replacement of faulty disks. Nevertheless, there may be reasons why users may wish to have an alternative to hiring and the following basis has been adopted:

On the payment of a capital contribution of \$400 a private disk pack will be made available to a user for a period of 3 years. The disk pack is the property of the Centre but the Centre accepts liability to replace faulty packs and will be responsible for storage.

3 THE AVAILABILITY OF DECTAPES THROUGH THE MOUNT COMMAND

DECTapes have been available for some time through the FILE command and a number of people have made effective use of them. The FILE mode of operation is inconvenient in some ways, particularly in that being essentially an off-line process, the files involved must be kept on the user's area until the transfer is complete. This

will cause problems when the files would leave the user with storage in excess of his quota. It has been decided that the MOUNT facility, which is documented in the DECsystem-10 User Guide, should be available for DECTapes. This facility should ease many of the file storage problems for the smaller user and remove the problems that exist with the FILE procedure.

It is realised that the present file storage limits can be severely restricting. However, it should be remembered that the public disk file system, which now has a capacity of just under 120,000 blocks, has about 10% free capacity and this much only because some people do not use their full quotas of storage. This margin is very small and even with the availability of additional drives presently on order, it is unlikely that quotas will be expanded. Indeed, it may even be necessary to transfer infrequently accessed files to magnetic tape should usage of disk space increase significantly. Schemes for the transfer of such files to a non-permanently mounted disk structure are under consideration and when operational, it should be possible to expand storage quotas.

At the moment, use of private disk packs is providing a solution to some large scale users. We hope that the availability of DECTapes for MOUNTing will provide a similar facility to the smaller user, though in the long term the schemes mentioned above for non-permanently mounted structures offer a better solution to the problem of expanding on-line file storage. As users may appreciate, a significant increase in DECTape usage could cause operational problems and the systems service to all users could suffer as a result. The use of DECTapes to expand storage limits is a temporary measure to assist users until a fully supported file migratory system can be introduced. In the meantime, we request users to assist us by limiting DECTapes to essential use and as far as possible using the MOUNT facility after 1800 hrs daily.

Listed below are the technical and operation details for the usage of DECTapes:

- a) The DECTape has a capacity of 574 blocks (127 words) and up to 22 files. The label will be assigned by the Computer Centre on registration of the tape and will generally be of the form Dnnnnn (where nnnnn is a 5 digit number).
- b) Access to the DECTape is through the FILE command for off-line transfer or the MOUNT command for on-line use. Both these commands are documented in the DECsystem-10 Users Guide and the UQ Users Guide, MNT-16.

Please note that the availability of a DECTape handler as indicated by the RESOURCE command does not necessarily mean that it will be made available to a user as it may be required for system functions. Only one DECTape will be made available to a user at any one time, except by special arrangement. In the case of system problems, it may be necessary to request a user to relinquish a system resource, DECTapes included.

- c) The charges for the use of DECTapes are given below. Except for the data transfer charge, at the moment these charges are manually entered at some time after the actual usage and may not explicitly appear in a user's record of computer expenditure. For a comparison, the rates for other storage media are also shown.

Please note that the present weekend operation is classed as non-prime use.

	Internal	External
<u>DECTape</u>	\$	\$
Hire of tape per month	1.00	1.00
Purchase and Certification/tape	15.00	15.00
Storage of privately owned tape/month	.50	.50
Access to a tape through FILE	.40	.40
Use of the MOUNT procedure plus occupancy charge per hour	.40 3.00	.40 6.00
<u>Private Disk Pack</u>		
Hire per month	20.00	20.00
Capital Contribution for 3 year availability	400.00	400.00
<u>Prime Shift</u>		
Use of the MOUNT procedure plus occupancy charge per hour	1.00 4.00	1.00 8.00
<u>Non-Prime Shift</u>		
Use of the MOUNT procedure plus occupancy charge per hour	1.00 2.00	1.00 4.00
<u>Magnetic Tape</u>		
Hire of 2,400 ft. tape/month	2.00	2.00
Hire of 1,200 ft. tape/month	1.00	1.00
Use of MOUNT procedure plus occupancy charge per hour	.40 3.00	.40 6.00